

Rep. Ellen Cogen Lipton (District 27)

From: Social Justice <mumford.social.justice.league@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 3:14 PM
To: Rep. Lisa Lyons; Rep. Ray Franz; Rep. Hugh Crawford (District 38); Rep. Kevin Daley (District 82); Rep. Bob Genetski (District 80); Rep. Pete Lund (District 36); Rep. Tom McMillin (District 45); Rep. Thomas Hooker; Rep. Brad Jacobsen; Rep. Amanda Price; Rep. Ken Yonker; Rep. Ellen Cogen Lipton (District 27); Rep. David Knezek (District 11); Rep. Winnie Brinks (District 76); Rep. Thomas Stallworth (District 7); Rep. Collene Lamonte (District 91); Rep. Theresa Abed (District 71)
Subject: House Bill 4369

Dear House Education Committee Members,

Since HB4369 and the growth of the EAA is being discussed in committee again, we would like to give you insight to our daily lives as Mumford students in the EAA.

We have imperative concerns at Mumford High School, now part of the Educational Achievement Authority. We need a quality education, and it is necessary that we are taught the skills we need to use in everyday life and for when we enter college. This is not being addressed properly at Mumford High School. Teachers are not preparing us for college or other career fields. Some teachers show un-educational videos. One of the sites that the teachers are required to use is Buzz. Buzz is an online curriculum and planner that is supposed to help students learn at their own pace. While Buzz is beneficial because you get to work at your own pace, we also need to interact with other students and our teacher. The whole point of the EAA basis was to interact with students on a one-on-one basis. However, classes are too large so we are not able to have the individual attention that we need to excel. Also, the large class sizes hinder students who cannot learn in large environments.

Some of these large classes are due to incorrect placement of students. There are only 4 counselors for over 1100 students. Due to the shortage of counselors, students are being placed in classes they have already passed or do not belong in, which messes up our credits and makes us frustrated and not want to do work. Because counselors have to rush to get schedules done, students' academic requirements are being overlooked. There are also too few teachers for the number of students at Mumford, and some of our classes are being taught by substitutes who do not or cannot explain the work to us.

Special needs students are also hindered at Mumford under the EAA. Special needs students are often picked on and physically assaulted. They are not getting the learning, the help, the one-on-one time, and counseling that they need because there are not enough special education teachers and support to meet their needs.

Another thing we did not mention is **safety**. The security guards do not thoroughly check IDs or our items when we come to school each morning. They do not always open bags, and when they do, they treat our belongings like they are trash. When there are fights, security guards do not show up promptly. We need more and better security personnel.

An example of our concerns about safety happened on Friday, January 18, 2013. Many of us did not come to school or left school early because we did not feel safe at school that day. We did not feel safe because gang members planned on and came to Mumford with the intent to shoot our school building. The threats were on social media and spread throughout the building, but the school administration did not take the steps we felt were necessary to keep us safe. First of all, parents were not notified to pick up their students. We were not

reassured that we were perfectly safe in the building, even though we have had numerous previous situations where students were letting in family members and friends through side doors. There are often random people coming into the school during dismissal. No one checked classrooms to see if all students were accounted for or if anyone was present who should not have been. Students and staff were not informed of the situation at hand, and better precautions should have been taken.

We are getting half an education in a complete correctional facility. When we go to lunch, the security guards are standing on the stair wells looking down on us like we're in a mess hall. We are required to wear our IDs with our student/prisoner numbers around our necks and visible at all time. Security guards walk beside us in the hallway and constantly question us about what we are doing and where we are going. Administration punishes students with lunch duty, forcing students to do manual labor when they are supposed to be learning.

We were promised equity, choice, and reinvention by the EAA. In actuality, we received inequality, restriction, and regression. Last year, Detroit Public Schools gave Mumford equity, choice, and reinvention, we want DPS back and the EAA not to expand.

We meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm in room C138 at Mumford. We would love for you to come visit us at a meeting.

Thank you,
The Social Justice League of Mumford High School